

# Members' Briefing



**Barking &  
Dagenham**



## **Council signs up to UNISON's anti-racism Charter**

The council has become the latest local authority in the capital to sign up to UNISON's anti-racism charter last week.

The charter, which aims to tackle racism in the public sector, commits organisations and their leaders to having a clear and visible race equality policy, as well as a programme of anti-racism initiatives such as training for all staff.

It also includes promoting a diverse workforce, addressing the impact of racism on staff wellbeing, and regularly reviewing strategies to improve racial equality, diversity and inclusion so the organisation can reflect the communities it serves.

The charter is part of a wider UNISON initiative to combat racism in the workplace and comes in response to a survey by UNISON in London of 1,000 black workers. This revealed that only 30% felt their employer took race equality seriously.

Additionally, half of those surveyed (51%) also said they had witnessed or been a victim of racial discrimination at work, and 53% said they believed race had prevented them from progressing in their career.



## **Borough marks 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence**

Last Saturday, 25 November saw the start of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence, the global campaign that aims to end violence against women and girls.

Far too many women and girls in our community are the victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence, forced marriage and other kinds of gender-based violence. Tackling these issues is a key priority for us and wherever it happens, it is not OK.

Every day throughout the 16 Days, residents are being invited to join in the conversations. Their thoughts and opinions are critical, and we are keen to hear them. Only by all of us working together can we eliminate violence against women and girls.

Any resident, their family member or friend who is in need of support can please head to our [website](#).

---



### **Apprenticeship funding available for local businesses**

Local businesses are being invited to attend a workshop hosted by the council and [Workwhile](#) to find out about apprenticeships to help address their workforce challenges.

Attendees will be able to find out about the support and funding available from Workwhile and the council.

The online event is designed for local businesses who are looking to create apprenticeship opportunities for new and existing staff.

The event will take place on Wednesday, 29 November from 12 noon to 1pm. Interested businesses can register [here](#).

---



**Residents urged to Council to pay their Council Tax bills by Direct Debit for a chance to win £1,000**

Residents are being reminded to pay their Council Tax by Direct Debit as it saves them time and hassle, helps them manage their personal budget and be in with a chance to win £1,000.

By setting up a Direct Debit, residents do not have to worry about missed payments or have to deal with any additional costs for late payments.

Importantly, everyone who pays their Council Tax by Direct Debit in the borough will be automatically entered into a prize draw for a chance to win £1,000.

To be eligible, residents must be registered to pay their Council Tax via Direct Debit by midnight, 30 November and the lucky winner will be randomly selected.

[Residents can find out more here.](#)

---



## **Colin Pond Trust celebrates 52 GCSE geniuses**

Over fifty of the borough's youngsters were celebrated in a prestigious event at the Broadway Theatre. The Colin Pond Trust recognises exceptional GCSE students who are continuing their education in the borough for sixth form or college.

Launched in 2001, the Colin Pond Trust has so far granted nearly 400 scholarships.

You can watch the highlights [here](#).

---

## Training updates for councillors

This week we have included details of a number of LGiU and LGA courses and events. For details on how to access the courses, please see the Members' Training section below.

---

## Borough News

---



### **Barking Mad About Christmas is back – time for some festive magic**

Barking Town Square is set to come alive with live performances, workshops and family entertainment on Saturday 2 December.

Residents and visitors can sing along to their favourite Christmas carols and get creative with Christmas crafts. They can also explore the market for stocking fillers and unique Christmas presents and test their luck with Christmas bingo at the Barking Learning Centre.

They can also meet Father Christmas for FREE as there is something for everyone this holiday season.

We look forward to celebrating with residents – [find out more here](#).

THE MAYOR OF BARKING & DAGENHAM  
COUNCILLOR DONNA LUMSDEN'S

# Caribbean Christmas Fundraiser

FRIDAY 8TH DECEMBER  
7.30PM - 11.00PM  
DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE FOOTBALL CLUB,  
VICTORIA ROAD, DAGENHAM

TICKETS £45 WHICH INCLUDE A WELCOME DRINK, CARRIBEAN  
MEAL, DESSERT AND ENTERTAINMENT  
ALL PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO THE MAYORS CHARITY FUND  
SUPPORTING CARERS OF B&D

SPONSORED BY:



*the* PartyBox

GRIMSBY & CO  
(ACCOUNTANTS)

## Mayor's Caribbean Christmas Fundraiser

Her Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Donna Lumsden, would like to invite you to her Christmas fundraising event – A Caribbean Christmas!

The event will take place on Friday 8 December from 7.30pm to 11pm at Dagenham and Redbridge Football Club, Victoria Road, Dagenham, RM10 7XL.

Tickets include a welcome drink, a main course, dessert, and entertainment. A pay bar will also be available on the night.

All proceeds from the event will be donated to the Mayor's charity fundraising for Carers of Barking and Dagenham.

If you would like to book tickets, please contact [carlie.townsend@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:carlie.townsend@lbbd.gov.uk) for a booking form.

Please feel free to share this with your friends and colleagues.  
Please RSVP by Thursday 30 November.

---



### **Valence House Christmas Market returns**

Residents are being invited to come along to the FREE Christmas Market at Valence House on Saturday 9 December from 11am to 5pm.



Visitors can pick up special presents for all the family and enjoy festive food and drinks while supporting local community stallholders.

There will also be a chance to meet Father Christmas in his grotto and receive a special gift (£3.50 per child and people must book in advance).

Visitors can also meet animals from Gemma's Christmas farm come rain or shine. Residents can find out more [here](#).

---



## **Back off! Man seen illegally dumping the back of a chair in latest Wall of Shame**

[The Wall of Shame](#) is [back](#), grime haters.

The [only show](#) on the internet that's out to get the fly-tippers who think they can treat our borough like a dump – but we need your help catching them.

If you know or recognise someone on the show, then get in touch by emailing [grimecrime@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:grimecrime@lbbd.gov.uk) now.

---

## Around the council

---



### **Residents interested in a career in construction invited to get in touch**

Residents interested in a career in the construction industry are being invited to get in touch with the Barking Riverside Innovation in Construction Centre (BRIC).

The BRIC training centre in Barking Riverside is offering construction training and qualifications plus brand-new test centre facilities where interested residents can book for their CITB Health, Safety and Environment tests. They will also be able to gain a Level 1 Health and Safety in Construction qualification.

On successful completion of the course, participants will gain the green CSCS labourer card which will allow them to work safely in the construction industry. Staff at the BRIC will also assist participants in gaining other industry related construction cards.

To find out more please contact [bric@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:bric@lbbd.gov.uk) or telephone 020 8227 2777/07977 017133.

You can also visit the website at: [www.lbbd.gov.uk/BRIC](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/BRIC)

---



## **Residents invited to open a savings account today through Barking and Dagenham Money**

Over £100,000 in affordable loans have so far been handed out to borough residents through our partnership with Leeds Credit Union.

The partnership aims to bring more affordable loans options and saving accounts to residents through Barking and Dagenham Money (BD Money).

The aim is to help local people become more financially resilient, keep more money in their pockets and access appropriate services to meet their financial needs and ambitions. This is not-for-profit, with all benefits staying in the community.

For residents considering opening a savings account through BD Money, it's straight-forward, hassle-free and there's also a wide range of trusted, low-interest loans available.

More information can be found at [www.BDMoney.co.uk](http://www.BDMoney.co.uk)



## Help and support available for residents through the Household Support Scheme

Residents who may be struggling with their finances or to make ends meet are being encouraged to get in touch.

Funding is available to vulnerable residents to support them with essentials over the coming months.

Residents can [apply online](#) or email [benefits@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@lbbd.gov.uk).

There are also [a number of other support services](#) including:

- Our Community Food Clubs which are free of charge and can provide £20 worth of food per week for a period of either three or six months at [www.lbbd.gov.uk/community-food-clubs](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/community-food-clubs)
- Our money and debt webpages provide an income and expenditure calculator and budgeting tools that will help people understand how

much money they have coming in and how much is going out, helping them look at areas where they can make savings at

[www.lbbd.gov.uk/money-and-debt](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/money-and-debt)

- Residents who are worried about their finances and need help to tackle debt can now get advice and support from our local Barking and Dagenham Money website at: [www.bdmoney.co.uk](http://www.bdmoney.co.uk)
- People struggling with increasing energy costs should contact their energy supplier about possible funds they may be entitled to, to help them through difficult periods. They can also access the Warm Homes Grant at [www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme)
- People with disabilities who aren't claiming specific disability benefits may be able to take advantage of a number of benefits available, including Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance (for children), and Universal Credit. For those caring for someone with disabilities they may be able to claim Carer's Allowance although this is means tested, at [www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled/disability-and-sickness-benefits](http://www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled/disability-and-sickness-benefits)
- People with a water meter who are experiencing financial difficulties may want to look into the Watersure scheme at [www.ofwat.gov.uk/households/customer-assistance](http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/households/customer-assistance). Most water companies also have a fund to help those who are struggling, and it might be worth contacting their water provider.
- People who are out of work and looking to get into employment can get help and support from our Job Shops at [www.lbbd.gov.uk/help-finding-work](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/help-finding-work)
- Anyone worried about a lack of skills can find courses and support on the Adult College website at <https://adultcollege.lbbd.gov.uk/>
- Residents who need help with emergency living expenses for food, fuel (gas and electric for customers who pay via a key meter), travel expenses and household appliances and/or clothing in exceptional circumstances can apply for help from our Hardship Fund (Individual Assistance Payment) at <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/discretionary-hardship-support/discretionary-financial-support-schemes>.

Residents can also contact our Homes and Money Hubs which are open for a drop in at Barking Learning Centre Community Hub and Dagenham Library Community Hub from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday or via email at:

[homesandmoneyhub@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:homesandmoneyhub@lbbd.gov.uk).

---



### **Jobs and training opportunities available from our Job Shops**

Residents who need help and support to get into work can visit our Job Shops.

Jobs and training opportunities are advertised on the website every Monday, and residents can register with the service by completing the [online form](#). They will then be contacted by a member of staff.

Alternatively, residents can contact the shops by telephone: Dagenham Job Shop – 020 8724 8877; Barking Job Shop – 020 8724 8870.

For details of jobs available every week, residents can visit [www.lbbd.gov.uk/help-finding-work](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/help-finding-work).

---

## Local Government News

---

### Autumn Statement

Last Wednesday the Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt delivered the government's [Autumn Statement](#), where he updated the Commons on the state of the economy, and tax and spending decisions.

Ahead of the Autumn Statement, London Councils wrote a [cross-party letter to the Chancellor](#) urging an increase in Local Housing Allowance (LHA).

With one in 50 Londoners currently homeless and living in temporary accommodation, we need the government to help us address the homelessness emergency unfolding in the capital. Ending the freeze on LHA is the single fastest way the government can reverse the deeply concerning rise in homelessness in London and across the country.

London Councils' latest survey of council finances has highlighted the extent to which council finances in the capital are on a "knife edge". A combination of fast-increasing demand for services, prolonged high inflation, and insufficient government funding represents a perfect storm for town hall budgets, with boroughs set to overspend on their original budget plans by almost £600m this year (2023/24).

Speaking ahead of the Autumn Statement, [Cllr Claire Holland, Acting Chair of London Councils](#), said: "London's worsening homelessness is wreaking havoc on council budgets. With one in 50 Londoners homeless and living in temporary accommodation arranged by their local borough, the human cost is enormous and financial cost utterly unsustainable.

“Alongside massive demands on adult and children’s social care services, spiralling inflation, and insufficient funding from government, boroughs are left in an extremely precarious position.

“The Chancellor must use the Autumn Statement to help councils weather the storm. We urgently need more funding support to stabilise budgets and sustain local services.”

London Councils’ latest survey of Londoners (see item below) has also highlighted residents’ ongoing concerns about the cost of living and housing affordability in the capital.

### **Soaring cost of living in London leaves ‘little room to breathe’**

New polling commissioned by London Councils and conducted by Ipsos has revealed that 75 per cent of Londoners cite cost of living as a top issue facing the capital. This is followed by affordability of housing, with seven in ten saying their rent or mortgage payments have increased in the last 12 months.

[Acting Chair of London Councils, Cllr Claire Holland](#), said: “Our research shows that the majority of Londoners have little room to breathe financially, largely due to soaring housing costs. It is striking that London’s housing affordability crisis is now affecting all sectors of society.

“Fundamental change is need to ensure Londoners have the homes and financial resilience needed to thrive.”

### **New funding welcome, but is only a first step to meeting roads backlog**

London Councils has welcomed the government’s announcement of £8.3 billion of funding for local roads maintenance but warned that the £0.2bn announced for London is only a “first step” in filling London’s £1.6bn repairs backlog.

[Cllr Kieron Williams, London Councils’ Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Environment](#), said: “London boroughs are delivering innovative new ways to fix our roads. However, innovation alone can’t fill the £1.6 billion



backlog in potholes and other vital works across our city's nine thousand miles of highways.

"London boroughs have been calling for a more robust and direct transport funding model for our city and every other part of the country, so we can clear the backlog and keep London and Britain, moving."

---

## **This week's coverage in the national and regional media**

**BBC, 24 November** – [Dagenham: Armed man dies in police shooting](#).

**Evening Standard, 23 November** – [Chadwell Heath: Six arrested after man hit with wooden plank in homophobic attack in east London](#).

**London TV, 22 November** – [Bellway starts work on townhouses at new development at Barking Riverside](#).

**Housing Ombudsman, 21 November** – [Ombudsman sees improve compliance, but record levels of complaint handling failure orders issued](#).  
Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

**Evening Standard, 21 November** – [Buying in London: the 10 most affordable boroughs for homebuyers in 2023](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

**BBC, 21 November** – [Barking man issued with 24 parking fines in three weeks](#).

**Riviera Maritime Media Ltd, 21 November** – [Passenger experience focus for Uber Boat by Thames Clippers' new ferry](#). Mentions Barking Riverside.

---

## **Media Releases**

[Barking and Dagenham Council signs up to UNISON's anti-racism Charter](#).

[Weaver's Quarter – Bouygues to conduct checks and repairs.](#)  
[Flu and Covid-19 vaccination now available at local pharmacies.](#)  
[East London council staff trained on dealing with knife wounds.](#)

---

## **Members' Training**

### **TT**Training from the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU)

The LGiU are offering the following sessions:

**Managing Casework:** Tuesday 28 November, 9.30am to 12.30pm (Online)

Sustainably carrying out multiple roles and working with a variety of people requires resilience and a healthy work-life balance.

Personal resilience is about maintaining a sense of well-being, being mentally strong, effectively meeting different demands and performing at one's best on behalf of individuals, and communities as well as being an effective leader. This is a very practical seminar that will provide each participant with methods and helpful ideas to manage the pressures they face and enable them to be able to maximise the positive aspects of being an elected member.

**Budget setting:** Thursday 7 December, 9.30am to 12.30pm (Online)

Dive into financial planning and budgeting, particularly when organisations are still grappling with the effects of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

Key outcomes:

- Understand the immediate and potentially ongoing financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis on the council's finances.
- Understand the financial planning and control process at a typical local council.

- Appraise and evaluate how councillors can most effectively influence budget and spending decisions.

### **Training from the Local Government Association (LGA)**

The LGA are offering the following sessions:

#### **Personal safety for councillors** - Thursday 30 November 10am to 11.40am

This event, which is government funded, has been specially devised for councillors who are keen to improve their awareness of personal safety. Built around the role of the elected member, the session is full of practical advice and guidance. Included within the webinar is advice on surgeries, canvassing, home visits and managing unexpected doorstep visitors.

#### **Data and managing council performance – free introductory training for councillors** - Friday 1 March 2024, 10am to 12.30pm

This introductory training session will focus on data and the role it plays in managing council performance. The programme which has been developed in association with King's College London has been designed for councillors.

The session will cover the following topics:

- what is data?
- common ways in which data is analysed and presented
- key questions to ask of our data
- performance management – measuring what matters.

### **One to One Development Sessions**

The LGA are offering councillors the opportunity to have one-to-one development conversations with one of the Leadership Academy Facilitators. This will be available to councillors in leadership positions for the next three months. These sessions are not political and will be provided by tutors from the LGA's Leadership Academy programme who a number of councillors might

have met from participation on the programmes. They will be focussed on helping councillors adapt their personal leadership style through three structured coaching calls.

For more information, please contact Leanna McPherson at:

[leanna.mcpherson@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:leanna.mcpherson@lbbd.gov.uk)

If you are interested in joining any or all of these courses, please email:

[leanna.mcpherson@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:leanna.mcpherson@lbbd.gov.uk) or [lois.taylor@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:lois.taylor@lbbd.gov.uk)

The LGA also offers help for new Councillors via the New Councillor Hub, which can be found [here](#).

### **And finally...**

The Members' Briefing is intended to keep you up to date with what is going on in the council, across the borough and in the world of local government. Please email [yon.edomi@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:yon.edomi@lbbd.gov.uk) if you have any suggestions on items for inclusion in future bulletins and any feedback you may have on how it can be improved.

---

---

This email was sent to [lois.taylor@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:lois.taylor@lbbd.gov.uk)

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham · Town Hall · 1 Town Square · Barking, London IG11 7LU · United Kingdom